

FRENCH INDO-CHINA

artistic control Even yet the Khmers do not wholly grasp the ideal of co-operation. The school's role is to keep up standards, both artistic and commercial; it considers its work that of a teacher until the Khmers themselves can take over its direction.

The in Cambodia

Christianity was preached in Cambodia by the Portuguese Jesuits in the sixteenth century, but without much success. The Spanish, arriving in 1581, had better luck in making converts of some important members of the Court. One Dominican even obtained important concessions from a king whom he had helped in a successful revolt. This official tolerance did little to increase the body of the faithful. The Khmer kings were never persecutors, and it was not until an invasion of the King of Siam that one of the Mission churches was destroyed and its priests led away as prisoners. This episode was curiously paralleled in 1835 when, during the last Siamese invasion, a church of Pjaom-Penfa was burned down.

Two forces oppose the spread of Christianity in Cambodia: the hold of Buddhism on all classes of the people, and their economic situation. Recently the government became the official protector of Buddhism, **and** has set about to educate its bonzes. This has been a great blow to the Mission, which had capitalized the ignorance of the bonzes in its propaganda, for Mission prestige had already been undermined by Cao-datism, the regenerated form of national Buddhism, very recently made such inroads that the government in alarm only two religions were permitted in Cambodia—Catholicism—thus ending an almost unprecedented history of tolerance.

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